

This record is a partial extract of the original cable. The full text of the original cable is not available.

C O N F I D E N T I A L PRETORIA 004297

SIPDIS

ABUJA PLEASE PASS TO A/S FRAZER

E.O. 12958: DECL: 10/21/2015

TAGS: [PARM](#) [PREL](#) [KNNP](#) [IR](#) [SF](#) [IAEA](#)

SUBJECT: SAG MAKES NO PROGRESS ON STALEMATE WITH IRAN
DURING OCTOBER 19 LARIJANI VISIT TO SOUTH AFRICA

REF: A. SECSTATE 00578

[B](#). PRETORIA 03814

[C](#). PRETORIA 03791

[D](#). PRETORIA 03267

[E](#). PRETORIA 2984

[F](#). PRETORIA 2963

Classified By: CDA Don Teitelbaum. Reasons: 1.4 (B&D).

[1](#). (C) Ali Larijani, Iranian Secretary of Supreme National Security Council (SNSC), visited South Africa October 19 for consultations on Iran's nuclear dossier with President Mbeki and Abdul Minty, DFA Deputy Director General and SAG Representative on the IAEA Board of Governors. Minty told A/DCM October 21 that bilateral discussions during the October 19 visit to Pretoria brought no progress on resolving the impasse over Iran's nuclear program. Minty said Larijani reiterated Iran's desire to resolve the issue diplomatically, but claimed the EU had broken off the negotiations. He added that the EU and Iran were continuing to search for a resolution through informal talks but that he understands they had made no progress. Minty noted that the SAG and the EU were maintaining close contacts on the state of the EU-Iran talks. He described the Iranian officials handling the issue as new and said they were simply rehashing old positions: nothing new was being put forward. Expressing a bit of exasperation, Minty said the two year dialogue was a "stand-off." A/DCM inquired about a press report that South Africa had repeated its offer to store Iranian uranium (Ref D, E, F). Minty explained that this offer was originally an IAEA proposal, and noted that the press reports were wrong, as was often the case. (Comment: In fact, the proposal was an Iranian initiative, see Ref F.)

[2](#). (U) Press reports noted the SAG's abstention September 19 in Vienna at the IAEA Board meeting on a US/EU-3 resolution referring Iran to the UN Security Council because of noncompliance with the NPT and pursuit of a nuclear program not exclusively for peaceful purposes. Larijani reportedly thanked South Africa for its position in September and hoped that Pretoria would maintain its current approach at the next Board session in November.

[3](#). (C) Ambassador Martin Slabben, DFA Director for Gulf States, told PolCouns October 20 that Minty alone had handled the "multilateral" aspects of Larijani's visit. On the bilateral side, Slabben was thrilled by an Iranian government decision to award a multimillion dollar cellular contract to MTN, bumping a previously selected bidder. Notwithstanding a potential court challenge by the dismissed bidder, Slabben said that Iran will issue the requisite license to MTN, which he said cost Euros 300 million. Iran's market includes 70 million people wait listed for land lines and an additional 7 million for cell phones, according to Slabben.

[4](#). (C) Comment: Handling of Larijani's visit confirmed Minty's strong influence over the SAG's relationship with Iran on the latter's nuclear program and the likelihood of continued SAG willingness to give Iran the benefit of the doubt regarding Iran's development of nuclear technology for "peaceful" purposes.
TEITELBAUM